

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending, including independent claims 1, 9, 14 and 15.

Independent claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Desai in view of Inoue (USP 6,295,503). The Examiner concedes that Desai does not disclose that partial (e.g., carpool) lanes and their entry/exit points are stored as separate links and nodes in the road network, but has cited Inoue for this feature. However, the Examiner is incorrect in asserting that Desai describes the claimed timing judging section, which operates both during route guidance to provide guidance notification regarding entry/exit between a carpool lane and an ordinary lane on the guidance route based on the vehicle position, and also operates when route guidance is not being performed to provide notification that the vehicle is approaching an advancing/leaving point based on the vehicle position. This feature is not at all described or suggested in Desai, and Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1-13 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Desai and Inoue (as above) and further in view of Kishi (USP 5,410,486). Kishi describes a system in which the timing of guidance for a turn at an approaching intersection or branching point is dependent on the width of the crossroad, the speed of the vehicle, and the lane in which the vehicle is presently traveling (see, e.g., Abstract; Fig. 5; col. 2, lines 47-62; col. 5, line 42 and following).


On the other hand, independent claims 1, 9 and 15 recite that lane change guidance between a partial lane and another lane is performed at a timing that depends on the location of a desired exit from the road and the width of the road (or total number of lanes). This specific feature is not described or suggested in Kishi. Claims 1, 9 and 15 have been amended to further clarify this feature. Specifically, claims 1, 9 and 15 now recite, inter alia, that an authorized section for changing lanes between a partial lane and another lane is selected based on the location of the authorized section, the position of the vehicle along the partial lane, the location of the desired exit from the

road, and the width of the road or the number of lanes in the road. This specific feature certainly is not present in the cited art.

The rejected dependent claims contain the subject matter of one of the independent claims discussed above and are patentable over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

In view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,


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